

CLAIMS

1. A method of enriching a population of cells in those cells which produce an antibody that recognises an antigen of interest, comprising:
 - 5 a) bringing said population into contact with an antibody that recognises a marker which is essentially unique to those cells present in the population which are capable of producing an antibody, said antibody being attached to a first fluorescent label;
 - b) bringing said population into contact with the antigen of interest;
 - c) bringing said population into contact with a sample comprising an antibody that
10 recognises said antigen, said antibody being attached to a second fluorescent label; and
 - d) separating from the population those cells which are detectable by virtue of being associated with the first and second fluorescent labels.
- 15 2. The method of claim 1, wherein parts a), b), and c) are performed simultaneously and the performance optionally comprises at least one wash step.
3. The method of claim 1 or 2, wherein parts a) and b), or a) and c), or b) and c), are performed simultaneously and optionally comprise at least one wash step.
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4. The method of any one of claims 1 to 3, wherein parts a), b) and c) are performed consecutively in any order, and wherein each performance optionally comprises at least one wash step.
- 25 5. The method of any one of claims 1 to 4, wherein part a) additionally comprises bringing said population into contact with an antibody that recognises a second marker essentially unique to those cells present in the population which are capable of producing an antibody, said antibody being labelled with a third label.
- 30 6. The method of any one of claims 1 to 5, wherein the separation of the cells producing an antibody that recognises the antigen of interest is performed using fluorescence activated cell sorting.
7. A method according to any one of the preceding claims additionally comprising:

- a) culturing a plurality of those cells associated with the antigen-antibody-particle complex;
- b) screening the cultured cells to identify those cells capable of producing an antibody which recognises an antigen of interest; and
- 5 c) isolating said antibody directly or indirectly from the cells.

8. An antibody prepared directly or indirectly according to the method of any one of claims 1 to 7.

10 9. A pharmaceutical composition comprising an antibody according to claim 8 and a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier.

10. The use of an antibody according to claim 8 for the manufacture of a medicament for the treatment and/or prophylaxis of a disease or condition.

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11. An antibody prepared directly or indirectly according to the method of any one of claims 1 to 7 for use in therapy.